

work and end the waste, yet that has been turned down time and time again by the Republican side. All we've asked is to pass a clean continuing resolution, keep the Government operating to a date certain and we do not care what that date is. We can do it once a week or something similar, but at least get these people back to work and stop the \$40 million a day waste of taxpayer money.

I forget how many times Senator DASCHLE has tried to offer that or has offered it here and has been turned down. More than 10 times, I believe.

So we have tried on this side of the aisle to save the taxpayers this \$40 million a day and to try to have some compassion and understanding toward Federal Government workers who have to make their house payments and their car payments and pay their doctor bills and everything else. Yet they are not getting their paychecks. Oh, they will get it some time in the future, but how do they make those payments right now? And to have done it over the Christmas season to me is just being hardhearted at its worst.

However, Mr. President, one group stands above it all: Members of Congress. Unlike Federal workers, our pay is guaranteed no matter what happens. Senator BOXER from California and I have offered on a number of occasions a bill that says that Members of Congress should not be treated differently, they should be treated like other Federal workers. It has passed three times in the Senate. Yet, it always seems to die someplace in conference or in the House of Representatives.

Here is an article that appeared in the Washington Post just today. The headline is: "Don't Touch Our Pay, House Republicans Say."

The article goes on to say that the House majority whip, TOM DELAY of Texas, the third ranking House Republican, said that "I'm not a Government employee. I'm in the Constitution," when he was asked about this bill that says that we should be treated like other Federal employees.

On CNN's "Talk Back Live" on December 19, asked whether he would support congressional pay cuts during a shutdown, he told the audience participation show: "No, I would not. I'm not a Federal employee. I'm a constitutional officer. My job is in the Constitution of the United States. I am not a Government employee. I am in the Constitution." That statement was made by House majority whip Congressman DELAY. Talk about the arrogance of power. I ask the House majority whip, who signs his paycheck? Is it signed by the U.S. Constitution? No, it is the Secretary of the Treasury. It is the Federal Government. You may be in the Constitution but first of all, we are all Federal Government employees. We are paid by the taxpayers of this country.

Our bill is being held up by arrogance, an arrogance of power. Some Members obviously see themselves as

above the average person. They are above Federal employees. Senator BOXER, I and others have offered, and we will do so again, an amendment that says that if the Government is shut down, Members of Congress should be treated like the most adversely affected Federal employee. If they are not getting their pay, we should not get ours either. If they are going to get paid back sometime in the future we would get paid back sometime in the future.

It is, again, an arrogance of power for us to say to a Federal employee, you have to go to work but you do not get paid. That is what we are saying. Or, you can stay home and not get paid, but you will get paid later on sometime. I think we should cover Members the same way and make sure that Members of the Senate and the House are treated just like the most adversely affected Federal employee.

Last, Mr. President, this Government shutdown is not about whether or not we have a 7-year budget agreement. The shutdown is related to whether or not our annual appropriations bills are passed and signed into law. They are not. And I again point out, at the end of the fiscal year, last September, only two appropriations bills had been passed. Only 2 of 13. We did not filibuster any of them, Mr. President. We did not filibuster one appropriations bill on this side. We wanted them to go through. The President, then, of course, has his constitutional prerogative to veto them and we try to work out something that he will sign.

I heard the Senator from Wyoming earlier say he mentioned November 14 when the negotiations started. I say that this summer, is when appropriations bills should have been passed and sent to the President—before September 30. Let the President, if he wants to veto them, he has that right, and we could have spent October and November working out appropriations bills that would pass. That was not done. Last year we passed every appropriations bill on time before September 30 last year.

Again, we should not get this confused. The reason the Government is shut down, the reason it is costing taxpayers \$40 million a day has nothing to do with reaching a 7-year balanced budget agreement which we all support. It has to do with whether or not we are going to do the job we should have done last year before September 30 in getting the appropriations bills passed and down to the President. We should not confuse those two.

We have to be about getting a balanced budget agreement. We have to make sure in reaching that in balancing the budget which I strongly support—and I know the present occupant of the chair supports—we may have a difference in how we get there—but I believe there is room to negotiate as long as we do not hurt people, as long as we do not take it out of the elderly and our young students in order

to give big new tax breaks for the wealthy in this country and we cut down on corporate welfare.

Yes, then we can reach a balanced budget in a way that is fair, decent, compassionate and caring to people of this country. If we can agree on that we will have a balanced budget in 7 years. However, if all we want to do is give new tax breaks to the highest income Americans and we want to make the elderly pay a lot more for their Medicare, I do not see how we can do that. We have to hold firm. We have to hold firm that we are not going to balance this budget in 7 years on the backs of the elderly or on the students or on hard working people in this country. I yield the floor.

THE BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, as of the close of business December 29, the Federal debt stood at \$4,988,664,979,014.54, about \$12 billion shy of the \$5 trillion mark, which the Federal debt will exceed in a few months.

On a per capita basis, every man, woman, and child in America owes \$18,937.06 as his or her share of that debt.

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now stand in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Thereupon, at 1:40 p.m., the Senate took a recess, subject to the call of the Chair.

The Senate reassembled at 4:43 p.m., when called to order by the Acting President pro tempore [Mr. WARNER].

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

ASSURING ALL FEDERAL EMPLOYEES WORK AND ARE PAID

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now turn to the consideration of the House message to accompany S. 1508, the back-to-work bill, and that it be in order for me to offer one amendment, the text of which is the following: Striking the expedited procedure language; two new sections regarding unemployment compensation and leave policy, as requested by the White House; legislative language to implement several administrative programs such as the Administration on Aging, unemployment insurance—in fact, their number probably is seven or eight: Protection and services for children, unemployment insurance, District of Columbia, programs for Native Americans, veterans that we need to act quickly on so that benefits will not be lost and, as I understand, we will have consent to offer the legislative language.